REMARKS

Claims 1-17 were previously pending in the application.

Claims 1-17 were rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Forest (US 5,999,895).

Independent Claim 1 recites a method of operating a program-controlled household appliance, which comprises: storing a set of program sequences in a memory and indicating the program sequences when required; permanently storing a set of programs specific to language regions in the memory; individually selecting and activating at least one of the programs with an external program selector having selector positions; permanently assigning each of the selector positions to at least one of the programs; providing additional functions for manipulation of a program selected by the program selector; selecting a desired indicating language by input manipulation; and making available an associated set of programs specific to language regions for selection by the program selector when an indicating language is selected.

Forest discloses a menu method and apparatus for use with various languages. The apparatus includes a display screen having multiple selectable regions on the display screen. Menu options in the various languages are displayed within the selectable regions of the display screen and a user may select a desired menu option by clicking on the associated selectable region on the display screen.

Forest does not disclose, among other things, "permanently storing a set of programs specific to language regions in the memory," as recited in Claim 1. Rather, Forest only displays the menu options in one of the various languages on the display screen. The languages may be changed, but Forest does not disclose storing a set of programs specific to language regions.

The term "regions" is used differently in Forest and the present application. The "selectable regions" of the Forest reference are not the same as the "language regions" of the present application. In Forest, the term "selectable regions" refers to a portion of the display screen that may be clicked by the user. In the present application, the term "language regions" refers to a geographic region of the world representing different

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countries and cultures. These different countries and cultures are generally differentiated by the language that is predominantly spoken within the language region. For example, a German language region may include Germany, Austria and Switzerland, an English language region may include the United States and Canada, and a Spanish language region may include Mexico, Central America and South America.

These different language regions of the world have many cultural differences, including the operation of household appliances. For example, if the appliance is a washing machine, cultures within the different language regions may prefer different cycle time periods or temperature levels for various washing cycles of the machine. Claim 1 recites storing a set of programs specific to language regions. These programs may reflect the cultural preferences of each language region, such as having different cycle times or water temperatures. It should be understood that the stored programs could include a variety of other variables, and time periods and temperatures are merely provided as examples. The stored programs for an English language region may be different than the stored programs for a German or Spanish language region. Forest does not disclose storing a set of programs specific to language regions. Therefore, Forest does not disclose all the elements of Claim 1.

In addition, Forest does not disclose, among other things, "making available an associated set of programs specific to language regions for selection by the program selector when an indicating language is selected," as recited in Claim 1. As recited in Claim 1, a desired indicating language is selected. An associated set of programs specific corresponding to the language region of the selected language is then made available. The programs that are made available may differ depending on which language is selected. As described above, Forest does not disclose having programs specific to language regions. Forest only discloses displaying the menu options in different languages. Because Forest does not disclose having programs specific to language regions, Forest also does not disclose making available an associated set of programs specific to language regions. Therefore, Forest does not disclose all the elements of Claim 1.

For these and other reasons, Forest does not disclose the subject matter defined by independent Claim 1. Therefore, Claim 1 is allowable. Claims 2-11 depend from Claim 1 and are allowable for the same reasons and also because they recite additional patentable subject matter.

Independent Claim 12 recites a method of operating a program-controlled household appliance with a set of program sequences stored in a memory and indicated when required, with an external program selector, by which programs are individually selected and activated, each position of the program selector being permanently assigned a program, and with additional functions for manipulation of a selected program, which comprises: permanently storing a set of programs specific to language regions in the memory; selecting a desired indicating language by input manipulation; and making available an associated set of programs specific to language regions for selection by the program selector when an indicating language is selected.

As described above regarding Claim 1, Forest does not disclose, among other things, "permanently storing a set of programs specific to language regions in the memory" and "making available an associated set of programs specific to language regions for selection by the program selector when an indicating language is selected." Claim 12 also recites these elements. Therefore, the remarks above regarding Claim 1 also apply to Claim 12.

For these and other reasons, Forest does not disclose the subject matter defined by independent Claim 12. Therefore, Claim 12 is allowable.

Independent Claim 13 recites in a program-controlled household appliance, a control panel comprising: a memory storing a set of program sequences; a controller connected to said memory and programmed to execute said program sequences and indicate said program sequences; an external program selector having selector positions, said program selector connected to said controller for individually selecting and activating said programs, each of said selector positions being permanently assigned to one of said programs; functional units for manipulating a selected one of said programs; an indicating area having: program and function selection elements; informational

elements for informing a user about a selection of said programs and said functional units; and a display as an indicating element for indicating respective ones of said programs and parameters of said programs; said memory storing a set of programs, from which at least two different ones of said programs can be called up specifically for language regions; and operator control elements functionally linked to a command control of said controller for a selection of languages and programs specific to at least one of language regions and user information.

Forest does not disclose, among other things, "memory storing a set of programs, from which at least two different ones of said programs can be called up specifically for language regions," as recited in Claim 13. As described above regarding Claim 1, Forest discloses displaying menu options in different languages on a display screen. Forest does not disclose storing different programs specifically for language regions. Therefore, Forest does not disclose all the elements of Claim 13.

For these and other reasons, Forest does not disclose the subject matter defined by independent Claim 13. Therefore, Claim 13 is allowable. Claims 14-17 depend from Claim 13 and are allowable for the same reasons and also because they recite additional patentable subject matter.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the rejections and allowance of Claims 1-17. If the Examiner has any questions regarding this amendment, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned. If an extension of time for this paper is required, petition for extension is herewith made.

Respectfully submitted,

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